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THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION

BY

D. B. SOMERVELL, M.A.

FELLOW OF ALL SOULS COLLEGE
OXFORD

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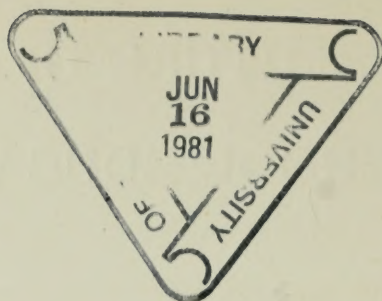
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The more he gets to know
Of his own life's adaptabilities,
The more joy-giving will his life become.

BROWNING.

More brain, O Lord, more brain!

MEREDITH.

The great instrument of moral good is the imagination.

SHELLEY.

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THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION

IN the pages that follow an attempt is made to consider the deficiencies of the education at present given at public schools, and schools with a similar curriculum, and at Oxford and Cambridge, and to make some suggestions as to their improvement. It may be thought that any one who presumes to add to the already overwhelming literature of education should justify his action. The present writer can only plead that he received the education given at the institutions referred to above, and is greatly impressed by the amount of time wasted by himself and others, not only from the nature of the subjects taught, but also from intellectual laziness largely induced thereby.

The criticism and suggestions that follow rest on a certain ideal of education which may be defined at the outset. According to this ideal the main objects of education fall under three heads :

(1) *The acquisition of knowledge.* This is the only object in technical education. In a general or liberal education, which aims at fitting a man for life generally and not for this or that profession or trade, it is not the sole aim, but it is of paramount importance.

(2) *The training of the mind and imagination as instruments of judgement.* With this object in view subjects are taught, not for the sake of the facts which may remain in the pupil's mind, but in order to fit that mind by exercise to deal with and form sound ideas and judgements on whatever it may encounter.

(3) *The training of the capacity for intellectual and imaginative enjoyment.* The chief sources of such enjoyment are literature and the arts, and the object here is to train the pupil's power of appreciation.

In what follows the writer concerns himself only with education in what might be called the narrower sense—class-room or intellectual education. Character and formation of character are of course of paramount importance. They raise, however, wholly different issues, and are not dealt with here except in so far as a sound intellectual education furnishes a valuable support to moral training.

It would of course be quite possible to agree as to these objects but to disagree as to the best way of attaining them. Present-day education aims at them in part, but it appears to have another aim as well. Much of what is taught at present is based on the idea of training professional students of particular subjects, notably Latin and Greek. It will be urged in what follows that this is a mistaken aim. The proportion of boys who are fitted to become professional students is very small, and for the boy of average ability the first stage of a student's training, which is all he will accomplish, is by itself of little value. The potential student should have the opportunity of beginning to specialize at School, and he will specialize more completely at the University. At both School and University, however, the person to be considered is not the student but the educated man who will devote his life not to learning, but to some other branch of the world's work. It is necessary to consider what his education should have made him when he goes into his profession or business, and how far this or that subject trains his mind for the duties of life and citizenship. Learning as a whole will

not suffer. The natural student soon discovers his special gifts, and his learning will be all the more valuable for having its basis in a more general education than at present. Branches of knowledge other than the Classics continue to attract students, although their rudiments are not taught to children. Classical scholarship and ancient history and politics will remain one of the most fascinating fields of study and research, and if there are reasons for abandoning them as school subjects, there is little fear that they will be neglected by the learned.

The most marked feature in the present system is the prominence given to the study of languages. The boy entering a public school has to make his choice between Greek, Latin, and a little French on the one hand, and German, French, and a little Latin on the other. It is not suggested that other subjects are wholly neglected. A boy learns enough Arithmetic to be able to calculate how long a bath will take to fill under various circumstances ; he learns the rudiments of Algebra, Geometry, and Natural Science ; he also gets a nodding acquaintance with the English Kings and their wars, and possibly with trade winds and areas of volcanic action. Most of his time, however, is devoted to languages. Since the universities have hitherto only opened their doors to the sesame of Greek and Latin, the more intelligent boys are found on the Classical side. A detached observer could not help being struck by the oddity of this. The explanation is to be found in the intense conservatism of education. Five hundred years ago classical studies assumed the leading place in the world of learning. The thought of that day was emancipating itself from the bonds of a too rigid ecclesiasticism by a return to the philosophies and arts of Greece and Rome. Translations were few, and the educated man, if he wished to

understand and keep abreast with the movements of his day, had to learn Latin and Greek so as to be able to read the books written in those languages. These conditions now no longer apply, yet every one who desires to go to Oxford or Cambridge is still compelled to show a pretence of knowledge of these languages, and a classical education still remains the normal education offered in upper-class schools.

The extraordinary difficulty in effecting educational changes can be traced partly to a natural complacency and partly to the control exercised by experts and specialists. The educated men of any age feel that such and such education has produced them. They are alive to their own mental virtues and are inclined to doubt if any other system could have produced so good a result. In any case they feel it would be dangerous to make the experiment. In the second place the lines on which upper-class education is to be run are mainly settled by the teachers and professors. These have got their positions in the present system because they are experts in, and enthusiasts for, the subjects now being taught. They are therefore very unlikely to favour a change which would relegate those subjects and themselves to a subordinate position. It might be thought that if there were a real demand for a different kind of education, new institutions would arise to supply it, and that in this way changes could be effected. To a certain extent this happens; but even if the demand were greater than it is, the old institutions have so many attractions for us, apart from their curriculum, that no real change will be effected unless the old schools and universities adopt it themselves. If radical changes are needed, theirs is the responsibility if they are not made.

In considering Greek and Latin in detail, no attempt will be made to deny that each, notably the former, is a fine language with a fine literature. It is also beyond dispute that the study of ancient history and politics is an instructive one and by no means of merely antiquarian interest. The chief argument against retaining these languages in their present position is that a knowledge of them is not necessary for the educated man, and that the time now devoted to them is urgently required for other subjects. The nature of these subjects and the reasons for their introduction will be dealt with later, and therefore this argument need not be developed here. There are, however, other reasons, arising out of the nature of the languages themselves, why they are bad educational subjects. In the first place, as languages they are too difficult. There is very little profit in learning a language unless the stage is reached at which it is readily understood and its subtleties appreciated. Of the thousands who start on Latin and Greek few only reach this stage with the former and fewer still with the latter. This was expressed forcibly by a writer of the last century who stated that it was a good thing to send a man to Cambridge, but that this did not justify us in sending large numbers only as far as Royston. The boy who gets only as far as the lower half of the sixth form of a public school gets practically no benefit at all from Greek and Latin. He has spent the most educable period of his life in the study of these two languages. He has not reached the stage when he could read even easy books in either of them for pleasure. He has not even approached the stage at which a study of the original could be more profitable than the reading of a good translation. In most cases he dislikes the work, and

the chief impression he carries away from school is that brain-work is apparently a necessary, but undoubtedly a tedious, form of exercise. With the exception of the few natural scholars, the majority even of moderately able boys regard their classical composition and translation as work to be got through as quickly as possible. They are justified because, except for the potential student, the work is waste of time. The dismal story may as well be traced to its conclusion. Set books are got up for the Entrance Examinations to Oxford and Cambridge. The man, and there are many such, of average ability, whose aptitude for the classics is small and whose aversion from learning dead languages is intense, only gets free from the toils when his intellectual energy and enthusiasm have been destroyed by the working of this system. Whatever his other abilities, unless a boy will consent to waste his time mastering the elements of these languages, every obstacle will be placed in the way of his progress.

Many advocates of Latin and Greek would admit some at any rate of the above. They know that practically all men who do not go to a University, and many who do, never open their Latin and Greek text-books after their last examination has been passed. They would also admit that to the majority these subjects are distasteful. They urge, however, that the learning of these languages is a wonderful training for the mind. There are several arguments often brought forward under this head which must be kept separate. It is claimed on the one hand that it is a good thing to make boys work at something they dislike. Life, it is urged, is full of drudgery, and it is therefore sound policy to make people do things they dislike while they are young. The argument is usually advanced by men who

themselves enjoy their classics and would presumably have been better men if they had been made to study the Differential Calculus or Biology. The infliction of suffering for the sake of the disciplinary effect alone, without any attendant advantages, is probably no longer regarded as sound policy in any other department of life. If moralists consider it necessary, let us introduce the rack and the thumbscrew into our schools, but it is a fatal policy to apply to the education and training of the mind. No one wants to make learning easy: that is an impossibility. But the mind, especially when young, will not absorb knowledge nor will it seriously exercise itself, unless it feels some natural affinity with the subject-matter presented to it. Carried to its conclusion the argument leads to the most palpable absurdities. Find out what the boy dislikes and then try and make him do it. The slightest sign of aptitude or enjoyment of any branch of study should be at once checked by transferring the boy to some other work in the hope that he will dislike it. The idea, such as it is, rests on the fallacy that work that is enjoyed does not exercise the mind. The truth is rather that no boy will use his mind except on subjects in which he feels some interest. The word 'Easy' is often used and is ambiguous. It is easy to work at what one likes, but the work is not necessarily easy in the sense that it demands little mental effort to accomplish.

On the other hand we are told that the learning of the languages themselves trains and equips the mind to deal efficiently with the problems of life. This argument is seldom developed, and no explanation is given as to how the training works. Any mental work which is not mere mnemonics must train the mind to some extent. The study of languages, however, probably

trains it less than any other. The natural linguist grasps the idioms and modes of expression by a kind of intuition, as the natural pianist absorbs a piece of music in his fingers. It may train his mind for the learning of other languages, but it is not a general training. The indifferent linguist may have to reason : this is such and such a tense, the equivalent in English of an unfulfilled condition, and therefore translated in such a way. This reasoning, however, is of the most elementary character; it is the application of rules learnt by heart, the learning by heart and remembering being the difficulty. What is wanted is a training which will help the mind to form clear ideas and judgements, to understand and disentangle this and the other factor in a problem, and aided by the imagination to see the logical conclusion. Languages as such train neither the imaginative nor the reasoning powers.

One more argument may be disposed of while on this subject. It is urged that by learning Latin, and notably by doing Latin prose, the student is taught to write his own language. It is forgotten, however, that one side of a square is shorter than the other three. The direct teaching of English is a more efficient and rapid method. If our classical teaching were to be judged by the knowledge of the English language possessed by the boys in the upper half of an ordinary public school, it would indeed stand condemned. Our system produces the amazing result of turning out men who have a working knowledge of Latin and Greek syntax, but practically no idea of the rules and structure of an English sentence. In those schools, and there are many, where the English language as such is not taught, how many boys in the top form could give a tolerable account of the use of the subjunctive or the comma in

English? If it is necessary to learn the languages from which English is derived in order to understand it, then why this culpable neglect of Anglo-Saxon? The argument is not a real one. Like so many on this subject it is an improvised defence, which is designed to conceal the weakness of the real position.

Apart from the above there still remains an entirely different argument. It is urged that though the languages may be difficult, yet in Greek and Latin literature and thought the student is brought into contact with some of the finest products of the human intellect, which, by reason of their detachment from modern life, are admirable training grounds for the young. Here the student can study History and Politics, Biography and Philosophy, and learn to appreciate the beauty of Poetry, without his vision being disturbed by the cross issues of contemporary prejudices and problems. That this would be valuable teaching is not denied, but the difficulty of the languages renders it impracticable for the average boy. It is the goal reached at the University by the first-class scholar. The amount of knowledge of ancient civilization or literature which the average boy acquires through the reading of Greek and Latin books is very slight indeed. If the object is to familiarize the average man with the history and thought of the ancient world, the attempt to make him study the subject in the original tongues is a wasted effort. A more real knowledge of the message of the ancient world could be obtained from a few months' study of translations and the books of modern students than is acquired under present methods after the labour of years. Those who adopt this defence of classical education must themselves be baffled by the method of teaching Latin and Greek in vogue. Imagine trying to learn a

language without using translations. So many of us learn no languages after we have left school that the absurdity of this is possibly not so patent. Those who have will appreciate the prodigious waste of time involved, and will be inclined to congratulate those boys who attempt by use of a crib to compensate for the stupidity of the system at the expense of their own honesty. If it is going to continue to be necessary for an English gentleman, not that he should know, but that he should be taught Latin and Greek, he might at least claim to be taught on rational methods; be given at any rate the chance of acquiring a working knowledge of the language in the minimum of time.

If this reasoning is correct, the classics fail on every count as subjects forming the backbone of an educational curriculum. The knowledge of them is not necessary for the educated man, and they take up a large amount of time urgently required for other subjects. The languages are too difficult for any but a few natural scholars to reach the stage where they begin really to profit by them. As a result the average boy only learns from them to dislike his work. The various grounds of defence, whether based on their value as mental training, or on the importance of studying ancient civilization, do not justify their present position in the curriculum.

It is interesting to speculate how the teacher would fill up his weekly time-table if he were suddenly forbidden to teach languages. Many would feel that the basis of education had been struck away and that there would be considerable difficulty in filling up the present hours without resorting to technical instruction. And yet this would be educationally the ideal state. It is not practicable because if we are to take our place in the

world as Europeans as well as Englishmen, some knowledge of modern foreign languages is necessary. There should, however, be no difficulty in thinking out what should be taught if the whole time was available for subjects other than languages. The ancient Athenians, whose works of genius are so justly admired, apparently solved the problem.

Assuming, however, that one or two foreign languages are still taught, the departure of Latin and Greek will liberate many hours, and it is the object of what follows to consider how these should be used.

This question will be considered from the point of view of the three objects of education as defined at the outset. Before going into detail, it is clear that a subject may fulfil all these objects. Having been chosen because it contains necessary knowledge, it may also train the judgement, and prove a source of intellectual pleasure and recreation. This will be an advantage. It may also be noted that very little is said here with regard to facilities for specialization. The aim is to outline a curriculum suited for the average boy, and to decide on those subjects in which every one should be instructed. It is not meant, however, that specialization should be excluded. When boys get to the middle of the school they can devote more time to some subjects and less to others according to their aptitude. As they get older, and the potential students declare themselves, these can be given facilities in their different subjects. So far as his own subject is concerned the teaching of the specialist as a rule presents no difficulty. The only question is to decide how soon and how completely he should be allowed to give up other subjects.

In constructing a scheme for an educational curriculum the first point to be considered is what should an

educated man know.¹ Primarily he should know and be able to write his own language. The teaching of English is a subject which is receiving increased attention. Within this century, however, in a well-known public school, in one form only was any attempt made to teach boys how to write. This attempt was due to the enterprise of the form master and reflected no credit on the school organization. Essays were written in other forms, and doubtless a split infinitive or mistake in grammar was marked by a blue pencil, but no systematic instruction was given to help boys to express themselves. It would not be difficult to teach boys to write reasonably good English, and to give them sufficient knowledge of the syntax and structure of the language to enable them to improve their own style naturally by reading and practice. The ignorance of English syntax among educated people is practically complete, and any one who has come in contact with the 'English' of the ordinary public school man in after life will confirm the statement that the general level of style is extraordinarily low. In view of the absence of proper instruction this is not to be wondered at.

Secondly he should know something about modern England and the British Empire. It is the richer classes who have the greatest opportunity, and it is they who should and do have the major share, of

¹ For the sake of clearness the suggestions following under this head may be tabulated :

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 1. English language. | 3. Modern Europe. |
| 2. Modern England and British Empire : | 4. Geography. |
| (a) Government. | 5. Mathematics and Science. |
| (b) Law. | 6. Modern languages. |
| (c) Economics and industrial conditions. | 7. Religion. |

governing our country and administering its laws. It is therefore of the greatest importance that they should realize what its condition is, and what are the problems before it. Modern England is practically never mentioned at a public school. For possibly one term in seven a boy may devote twenty to thirty hours to a study of the nineteenth century up to the end of the reign of Queen Victoria, or possibly nowadays to Edward VII. This, however, does not give him much assistance in fulfilling his duties as a citizen. The ordinary educated man is left to pick up odds and ends of information about his country from the tainted source of a partisan press. The extent of his prejudices and the depth of his ignorance could be gauged by collecting the sixth form of a school, or undergraduates in their first or second year at a university, and making them, without the aid of an Encyclopaedia or the *Daily Mail Year Book*, write an essay on 'Trade Unions'.

Experience in the first few years would show what could best be taught and in what ways, but the main lines are fairly clear. In the first place a boy should be taught how the United Kingdom and the Empire are governed, how our rulers obtain their positions, and the machinery by which they make laws and administer them. A certain amount of history would be necessary to understand and appreciate our present constitution, but so far as the object of education now being considered is concerned, history would be subordinated to the understanding of the present position of affairs. As Professor Dicey points out it is unnecessary, in order to grasp the workings of our present Houses of Parliament, to take the student back to the Witanagemot. There would be no difficulty about instruction of this kind. It would be easier and far more practicable than

attempting, as is done at present, to teach boys about the Roman constitution. Our Parliamentary system is child's play compared to the intricacies of the Roman Comitia, and boys are far more likely to be interested in the veto of the House of Lords than in the veto of the Tribunes.

In the second place the rudiments of law should be taught. The absence of books here is conspicuous, because, although there are a certain number of educated men who are interested in the Constitution, there are very few who take any interest in law. It is not suggested that boys should be taught about Marine Insurance or Contingent Remainders, but as the subject has never been considered from the educational standpoint, a few detailed illustrations may be given of the kind of instruction that would be practicable and of use.

(1) The difference between Criminal and Civil Law, and between general principles of Common Law and Administrative Statutes such as the National Insurance Act.

(2) The difference between civil wrongs for which the Law compensates the wronged party, and crimes for which it punishes the wrong doer.

(3) The origin and demerits of our Land law.

(4) The rights of the individual against the state, and the position of the Government as a party to a Law suit.

(5) The difference between a limited company and a private firm or trader.

(6) The provinces of the different Courts of Law, from the Magistrate in Petty Sessions to the House of Lords.

(7) The difference between a Barrister and a Solicitor, and the general method of conducting litigation.

(8) The punishments that can be awarded for different crimes, and what life in a prison is like.

These are a few examples chosen at random. They are capable of expansion and it would not be difficult to write good school books on such subjects. Cases could easily be found giving concrete illustrations of the various points raised which would fix them in the mind. At the present time the ignorance of what a citizen should know about the law of his country, both in his own interest and in that of society, is deplorable. To take an example, we are all collectively responsible for the punishments which as a nation we inflict on criminals. One of the most terrible of such punishments is solitary confinement. Most people know of its existence because a well-known author wrote a play about it which was performed in London. How many people, however, know for what offences it can be given, who can give it, and what is the maximum period? How many even know in what books they could find information of this kind if they required it? Let us postpone learning about what led the delinquents of Rome to the Tarpeian Rock until we have had time to inform ourselves how Englishmen suffer to-day for their crimes and offences.

In the third place some time should be spent on Economics and the condition of the people. Political Economy is an admirable subject for the higher forms of a public school. Its general principles can be put in a perfectly clear and simple way, and it compels the student to grasp ideas and to reason from them. Side by side with the theory, the rudiments of industrial history and a general description of modern industrial England should be taught. If England is ever the scene of a class war, one of the reasons will undoubtedly be our neglect to teach our ruling classes the nature of the problems of industry. Large sums are spent on

education, partly at any rate in order that the pupil may be taught by men of ability. But the teacher is debarred by the system from using that ability to instruct the pupil in a way which will help him to form clear ideas and correct judgements on subjects on which his opinion will be of vital importance to his country. It might be urged that this kind of instruction would lead to party politics. The young would return to their aristocratic homes converted to socialism by the master of the lower fifth. It is easy to exaggerate the possible harm that could come from this and the extent to which it would be likely to happen. It is better in the first place to become anything by the use of one's intelligence than to remain holding hereditary opinions through ignorance and mental inertia. As a matter of fact, however, there would be little danger of schools becoming centres of political propaganda. It would necessarily be facts and conditions and general principles that would be taught, rather than the special issues which form the material of political controversy. If party questions occasionally arose, there would be this advantage, that boys would realize that there was a connexion between what they were learning in school and the events taking place in the world outside. As it is, boys talk and discuss politics, they have political debates, in which masters frequently take part, and they take in newspapers of various shades of political opinion. Teachers are at present in many ways trusted not to take unfair advantage of their position of influence, and there is no reason to suppose that they would abuse the opportunities that would occasionally arise of talking to their pupils on party questions.

The argument that the subjects mentioned are not suitable for teaching in schools must mean one of two

things—either that they are too difficult for boys aged from say fourteen to nineteen, or that they are not things which an educated man should know. The latter does not require refutation. The first objection has no evidence to support it, because the experiment on a large scale has never been tried. What evidence there is weighs against it. The average boy of to-day is easily interested in his country and its institutions and conditions. The intellectual difficulty of mastering the scheme of knowledge outlined above is not excessive. By reading in newspapers and periodicals the boy will constantly be reminded of what he has been taught in school, and he will at any rate have some facts and principles at his disposal by which he can criticize what he reads, and form his own opinion.

In the third place, some knowledge of Modern Europe is necessary. Our historians, having previously only one idea of teaching history, namely that of starting from the beginning, naturally gave up European History as a hopeless subject for schools. The result is that nothing is learnt about Europe except fortuitously, when some European country intervenes in English History. Since the War it will perhaps be admitted that it would have been better if Englishmen had, for example, been taught about the unification of Germany and how it was accomplished, even if this had necessitated less attention being paid to the Greek irregular verbs or the Wars of the Roses. Text-books on Modern Europe could easily be written which would give a clear idea of the present position without going back, except in a general introduction, beyond the French Revolution, and without attempting, even from that date, to give a continuous history. The educated man should know enough about Europe to understand the foreign policy of his own

country and the other great Powers, to realize what are the problems likely to give trouble, and to be able to form intelligent opinions on their solution. It may be admitted that this is what he should know, but it does not seem to have been regarded as a corollary that this is therefore what he should be taught. The policy rather has been to teach boys the History of the Peloponnesian War in the hope that they will apply ideas and principles extracted from Thucydides to modern Europe. This might be a sound method if the hope was fulfilled. It will be discussed more fully when the training of the judgement is being considered, but in reality the average man is not prepared to devote sufficient time to study, outside his work at school or the university, for it to be safe to omit teaching him what it is agreed to be desirable he should know.

The other subjects will not require so full a discussion. A certain amount of geography is necessary in order to understand books and newspapers. The position of the countries and important cities and rivers of the world should be taught, also the climates of different areas, the broad characteristics of the different races, and a certain amount of political geography. The criterion here would be the same, namely the acquisition of necessary and useful knowledge for the understanding of contemporary events, and the formation of intelligent opinions thereon.

There will be no dispute as to the necessity of any one who goes to school learning arithmetic. The ordinary school text-book covers the necessary ground. It is, however, curious and typical of our present methods and aims that whereas a boy is taught to do calculations depending on stock exchange transactions, he is taught nothing about accounts and simple book-keeping. Such

knowledge is bound to be useful, and it is incidentally a good training for the mind. There is a horror in educational circles of any attempt to supplant a liberal by a business education. This dislike is thoroughly justified. The aim of upper-class education should not be to train boys specially for this or that employment, but to train them as intelligent and educated citizens. There is, however, now practically no walk in life where a man may not be called on to keep accounts. The men most detached from business may become church-wardens or treasurers of Cricket Clubs. There is also little doubt that the Army Pay Department would thoroughly endorse the suggestion that men likely to become officers in after life should receive an elementary training in book-keeping at school. In any case this particular instruction would not take up very much time, and, as our mathematical text-books are already full of financial transactions, no real objection could be raised that such a step was commercialising education. A certain though small amount of Geometry and Algebra would be taught under this head, but both these subjects are valuable primarily as training the mind and will be considered hereafter. Science is in the same category. Certain elementary facts in Physiology, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics should be familiar to every one. To take one or two examples: every one should know the relative size and position of the earth in the material universe, and the main facts and theories of evolution and heredity. It would probably be a good thing if occasional instruction were given on elementary Bacteriology and Disease.

The chief difficulty about modern languages is to decide how many must be taught. The correct solution is probably to start with one language only, presumably

French, and not to allow the pupil to begin another until he has reached a definite, moderately advanced, stage in the first. It is much better that those who show little or no aptitude should be given a chance of making some progress with one language. The object should be to get boys as quickly as possible to the stage at which they can read with moderate facility. There is then no reason why, in the upper part of a school, an occasional science or history text-book should not be a French book. This would in some cases enable a more appropriate book to be chosen than exists in English, and would add considerably to the reality of the learning of the language. There is one possible solution of the language question which may be mentioned here. Any one who has tried, must have been struck by the great difficulty of learning French or German at a public school. Only a few hours a week can be devoted to it, the teachers are often Englishmen not chosen primarily for their skill as teachers of that language, classes are necessarily large, and there are no facilities for practising conversation out of school hours. The sons of the rich and intelligent learn French in the best way by going to France for some months just after leaving school, or in the university vacations. A tolerably efficient substitute for this might be found by starting special Modern Language schools of instruction in England, where boys could go for say six months after leaving school or between school and university. In such schools the instructors would be chosen for their qualifications as language teachers, and would not be classics or historians with just enough French or German to get through their teaching without displaying their ignorance. It would be possible to establish an atmosphere of the language taught, and in six hundred hours' work more

would be learnt than in twice or three times that number spent upon French at an ordinary school.

Religious instruction at most schools is confined to simple Bible teaching, and it is curious that in many definitely Church of England schools no attempt is made to enlighten the pupils on the position and history of that church in Christendom, nor as to what doctrines it considers necessary for its members to believe. This is thoroughly characteristic of the methods pursued in other subjects. Without diverging into theological controversy, it may be urged that in schools which are run on a definitely religious and Christian basis, something should be taught about Christianity as it is to-day ; what it stands for, on what the divisions between its various sects are based, on what grounds it is assailed, and what is its defence. It is possible that the disagreement among different schools of thought is so great that such instruction would be exceedingly difficult. This, however, only makes it the more desirable that the boy when he leaves school should have had the chief facts and problems put before him, so that he may be able to pursue the subject for himself on intelligent lines.

This concludes a rough sketch of what the educated man should know. There are doubtless omissions and there is obviously much room for argument on detail. It is hoped, however, that enough has been said to indicate the main lines on which this attempted solution is made. Some of the subjects enumerated would only be taught to boys as they were completing their school education. As has been stated, facilities should also be given to boys who wish to specialize in these or other subjects. It is contended, however, that every boy should be taught something about every subject that has been mentioned.

In considering Education as training of the judgement, the point of view is altered. There is a certain artificiality in separating these objects, because actually when the teacher is imparting knowledge for the sake of that knowledge, he should be aiming also at training the mind and teaching the pupil to think. In the same way any form of mental training will involve the acquisition of knowledge, which, while that particular training is continuing, must be retained in the mind. It is, however, important to keep the two objects distinct in considering a curriculum, and it should be remembered that the best and most economical results are obtained when the two reinforce one another, and the acquisition of necessary knowledge affords at the same time a good training for the mind.

It was stated above that enough history should be taught to enable the pupil to get a clear idea of modern England and Europe. If, however, he has the opportunity he will greatly increase his mental power and imagination and his interest in civilization and its problems by a wider study of history. English history would presumably come first. European or Ancient history would be special subjects for those who showed aptitude and interest in this kind of work. The latter as a training-ground of this kind cannot be too highly praised. Thucydides, for example, is full of situations and characters whose study, apart from its intrinsic interest, is very relevant to the state of modern Europe. The ancient democracy of Athens resting on slavery, or the Empire of Rome based on law, privilege, and the sword, afford the finest educational material for a race which is both democratic and imperial. The object of teaching history should be to teach the mind to think politically, and once there is a substratum of knowledge the teaching

should not be restricted to learning the formal history of this or that period. Subjects such as Nationalism, Democracy, and Economic conditions should be treated broadly in relation to the state of the world to-day.

The value of Mathematics and Science under this head has already been alluded to. The former so obviously exercises the reasoning faculties that it is unnecessary to enlarge upon it. The important thing about mathematical teaching is to know when to stop. There is no subject in which the limit of the individual's ability is so clearly marked. Beyond that limit it is waste of time to attempt to drag him. He may struggle for a time, but only at the cost of great mental suffering and the expenditure of hours which might more profitably be devoted to other things. Those with mathematical genius will naturally specialize in it. For the boy with only moderate mathematical ability the study of applied mathematics in Mechanics and Physics is more profitable than the more abstract branches of the subject.

Science, to those who are interested, is a similar but an even better mental training than Mathematics. The reasoning is less abstract, and it is often possible to demonstrate practically the correctness or incorrectness of a conclusion. There are few finer ways of learning to think than by a study of Physics and Physical Chemistry. To take an example from moderately advanced Physics, any one who has mastered the meaning of the two Laws of Thermodynamics has used his brain to some purpose. He knows what mental effort is, and has experienced the satisfaction that crowns intellectual perseverance. The same is true of much of even the elementary work in Physics and Chemistry. More than receptivity and a good memory are needed. The mind must react, and go through the process of reasoning

itself, before it can grasp what is presented to it. The study of Biology is less rigorous as a mental training, but in the hands of a capable teacher it is by no means a mere feat of memory, and the various problems of evolution and heredity are full of good material for training the powers of weighing evidence and of correct reasoning.

One other subject may be mentioned in this connexion, namely Logic. It is not contended that it is necessary to know Logic in order to be able to reason correctly, but a study of the formal machinery of ratiocination is a fine corrective for loose and slipshod minds. Most men's ideas would be clearer, and their arguments sounder, for even an elementary acquaintance with the subject.

The third factor of Education has been defined above as the training of the power of intellectual and imaginative enjoyment. There are here two main purposes. One is to stimulate intellectual curiosity, to produce men who are interested in the products of the human mind, who will of choice spend part of their leisure hours in studying and thinking about some subject or subjects outside their immediate work, and will in this way not only inform their minds but keep them supple and in exercise. The other is to train the power of artistic appreciation ; to give the pupil the key to the worlds of literature, painting, and music. Though treated last it is difficult to over-rate the importance of this side of Education. On the one hand, if the object is attained, the pupil will have at any rate one permanent source of satisfaction and interest for life. On the other, it is a lack of imagination that is the root of most evils, and it is Literature and the Arts that afford the best means of stimulating and developing this faculty.

Mr. Balfour once stated, when speaking of the practical

non-existence of the teaching of English Literature in schools, that we should all be thankful that there was one province of study upon which the schoolmaster had not laid his blighting hand. It is suggested, however, that the schoolmaster's hand need not necessarily blight. If it has done so in the past, the reason is to be found in the defects of the system of education. In most schools in which Literature is taught the methods are employed which have already been criticized in dealing with other subjects. The books used are frequently too difficult and beyond the powers of appreciation of the pupil. It is often found that boys are being made to read a book which the ordinary well-read man does not read for pleasure. This is obviously wrong. Again the teaching is carried on as if all boys were ultimately going to become students of Literature. The ordinary man will not become a student. He may, however, easily acquire a taste for good books. Most of the sons and daughters of well-read parents acquire it, and there is no reason why the opportunity should not be given at school to others who are not so fortunate. As a rule a classic of a century earlier than the nineteenth is studied in detail and with notes. This is profitable for boys with real aptitude and enthusiasm for Literature, but it is of no use to the majority who simply class the study of English Literature with that of Latin and Greek, as ways of spending the time which a few oddly constituted people apparently enjoy.

There is a fatal prejudice against giving boys modern books to read. But for one man who is attracted to books by first being introduced to old writers, a hundred come to appreciate the great works of the past through a study of contemporary literature. The chief necessity is a teacher who has the gift for interesting boys in books and

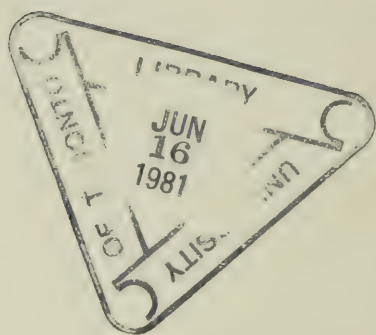
reading. It is absurd to assume, as is sometimes done, that because a man is an educated Englishman he can therefore teach English Literature. It is essentially a subject for a special master or masters. Such a master should be equipped with a library of books which he wants his pupils to read, and should have a free hand to organize them into different classes according to their tastes and aptitudes. The bulk of boys enjoy reading, and it should not be difficult to lay the basis of what may be one of the most permanent resources of life.

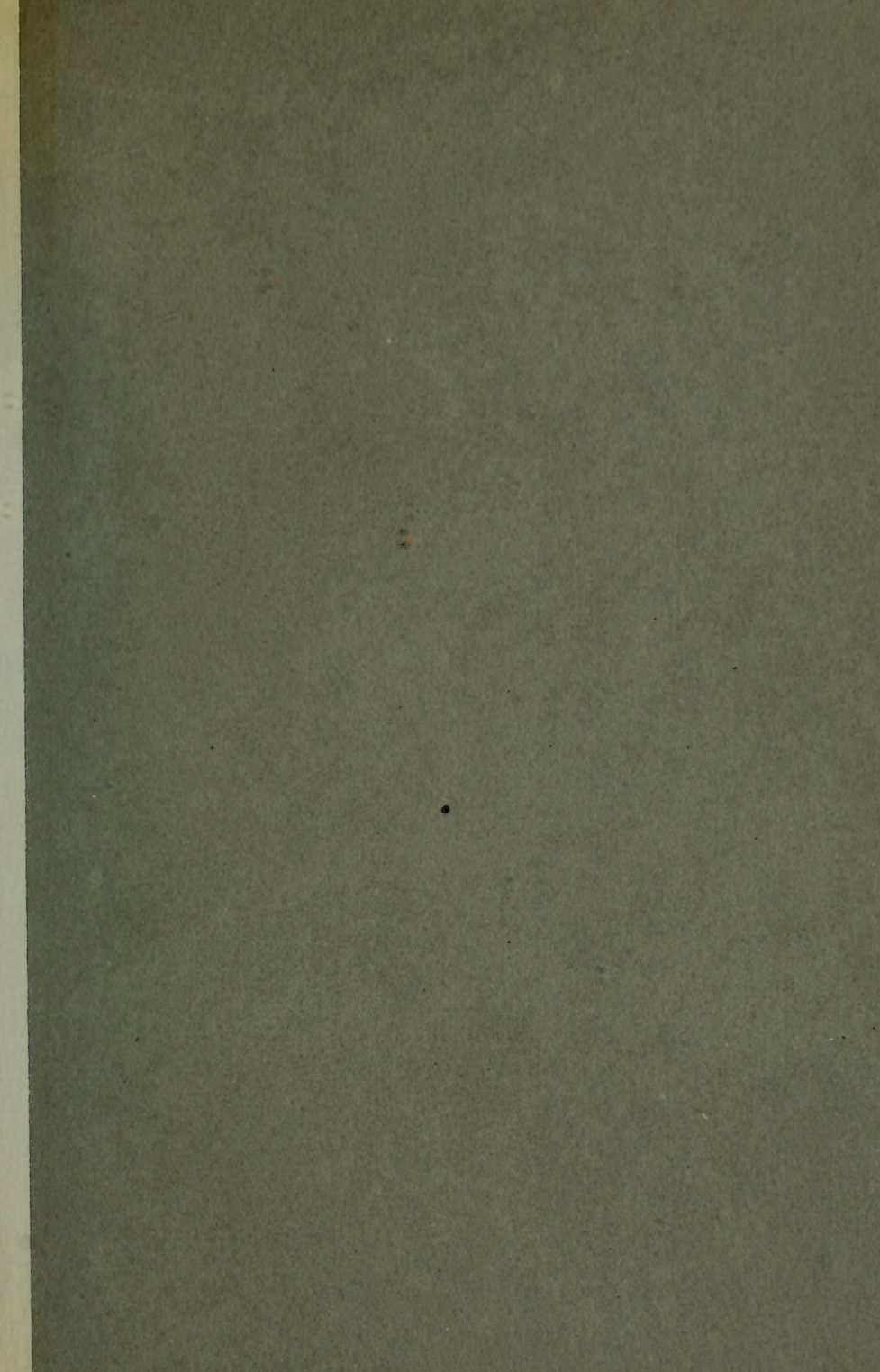
At most schools facilities are given for the study of Music and Drawing. Here again a detached observer would be amazed at the methods employed. He would see that in the world there are many capable of enjoying the Arts, but very few capable of becoming artists. Yet the only instruction offered is the first stage in the education of an artist. Boys are taught to draw, or to play the piano or some other instrument, but the much more important task, of teaching them to appreciate, is not attempted. Here and there teachers are found who devote an odd hour to pictures or music, but this is quite outside the system. By all means let those who have talent as performers be given the chance of training and developing it. But it is wrong to restrict the teaching to this. The power of appreciating what is great in an art is a faculty which requires training and developing like all other faculties. Many who enjoy ordinary popular music could easily be led to an appreciation of what is really great. At present by leaving the cultivation of this faculty entirely to the initiative of the individual, we debar many from sources of enjoyment which with a little effort might be opened to them.

The above suggestions, short and crude as they are, will outline sufficiently clearly the type of education

which is proposed. This age, like all ages, is full of problems, and it is the business of our education to produce men equipped to solve them. The present system is found wanting. Some of its aims are based on the false reasoning that because the student forms the apex of the structure, it is therefore necessary to train every one as if he were going to become a student. Its other aims are not fulfilled because the medium chosen is too difficult and too remote. The whole atmosphere of the class-room is divorced from life, even from modern intellectual life. The object of the ideas expressed in these pages is not to supplant the idea of a liberal education but to make it a reality. To produce men fitted by their knowledge to take a leading place in the life of their country, with minds trained to clear thinking, and with a broad culture based on and constantly refreshed by familiarity with the great works of the human mind in Art and Literature.

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